

THENI IAS ACADEMY –FREE COACHING FOR TNPSC GR -IV***THENI IAS ACADEMY******AKILA JEWELLERY BACKSIDE, THENI.******CELL-9976626064,9543064238*****FREE COACHING FOR TNPSC GR -IV****INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION**

The Indus Valley Civilization was an ancient civilization thriving along the Indus River and the Ghaggar-Hakra River is now in Pakistan and north western India. It is also called the Harappan Civilization, in reference to its first excavated city of Harappa. An alternative term for the culture is Saraswati-Sindhu Civilization. An alternative term for the culture in Saraswati-Sindhu Civilization.

R.B. Dayaram Sahni first discovered Harappa (on Ravi) in 1921. R.D. Banerjee discovered Mohenjodaro or 'Mound of the Dead' (on Indus) in 1922. Sir John Marshall played a crucial role in both these.

Harappan Civilization forms part of the proto history of India and belongs to the Bronze Age. Mediterranean, Proto Australoid, Mongoloids and Alpines formed the bulk of the population, though the first two were more numerous.

According to radio-carbon dating, it spread from the year 2500-1750 BC. Several important metals were in use during that time such as copper, bronze, silver and gold but iron was not known.

Geographical Extent

It covered part of Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, Gujarat, Rajasthan and some parts of western UP. It extended from Mandu in Jammu in the north to Daimabad in the south and from 'Alamgirpur in west U.P. in east to Sulkagendor in Baluchistan in the west.'

Recent Questions. Asked from this Section

Q. Regarding the Indus Valley Civilization, consider the following statements :

1. It was predominantly a secular civilization and the religious element. though present did not dominate the scene

2. During this period, cotton was used for manufacturing textiles in India.

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Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a. 1 only b. 2 only c. Both 1 and 2 d. None Ans: c

Major sites in Pakistan are Harappa (on Ravi in W.Punjab), Mohenjodaro (on Indus), Chanhudaro (Sindh), etc. In India, major sites are Lothal, Rangpur and Surkotda (Gujarat), Kalibangan (Rajasthan), Banawali (Hissar), and Alamgirpur (Western UP).

The Latest discovery was the site in India called Dholavira in Gujarat. Dr.J.P.Joshi and Dr.R.S.Bisht were instrumental in its discovery. It is also the largest Indus Valley Civilisation site.

Town Planning:The ancient towns had miraculously elaborate town-planning. It followed the Grid System. Roads were well cut dividing the town into large rectangular or square blocks. Lamp posts at intervals indicate the existence of street lighting. Planning the streets, lanes and by-lanes were well-planned houses.

Harappans used burnt bricks of good quality as the building material. Elsewhere in the contemporary world, mud-bricks were used. Houses, often of two or more storey, varied in size, but were quite monotonous – a square court-yard, around which were a number of rooms. No window faced the streets, the houses had tiled bathrooms.

Another aspect of the architecture of the towns was the well planned drainage system. Drains were made of mortar, lime and gypsum and covered with large brick slabs for easy cleaning. It shows developed sense of health and sanitation.

The towns were divided into 2 parts: Upper part or Citadel and Lower Part. The citadel was an oblong artificial 'platform some 30-50 feet high and ' about 400-200 yards in area. It was enclosed by a thick (13m of Harappa) crenellated mud-brick wall. In Citadel public buildings were there. In Lower part people used to live.

In Mohenjodaro, a big public bath (Great Bath) measuring 12m by 7m and 2/4m deep, has been found. Steps led from either end to the surface, with changing rooms along-side. It was probably used for ritual bathing.

Economic Life

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The Indus Valley Civilization was economically well advanced. It was ahead in time in production of various articles. Trade and commerce flourished not only within the civilization, but trade links had been established with other ancient civilizations as well.

Agriculture

The Indus people sowed seeds in the flood plains in November, when the flood water receded, and reaped their harvests of wheat and barley in April, before the advent of the next flood. They grew wheat, barley, rai, peas, sesame, mustard, rice (in Lothal), cotton, dates, melon, etc. The Indus people were the first to produce cotton. In Kalibangan, fields were ploughed with wooden ploughs.

. Remains of horse at Surkotda and dogs with men in grave at Ropar have been discovered. Food grains were stored in granaries.

Trade and commerce

Trade links were well established internally and externally. There was no metallic money in circulation and trade was carried through Barter System. Weights and measures of accuracy existed in Harappan culture (found at Lothal). The weights were made of limestone, stettite, etc. and were generally cubical in shape. 16 was the unit of measurement (16, 64, 160, 320).

Flint tool-work, shell-work, bangle making, etc were practices in art and craft. Raw material for these came from different sources: gold from N. Karnataka, silver and Lapis Lazuli from Afghanistan and Iran, copper from Khetri and Baluchistan, etc.

Bead making factory existed in Chanhudaro and Lotha. They were items of export. A dockyard has been discovered at Lothal. Rangpur, Somnath and Balakot functioned as seaports and Sutkagendor and Sutkakoh functioned as outlets.

The inland transport was done with bullock carts. Every merchant or mercantile family probably had a seal bearing an emblem, often of a religious character, and name or brief description, on one side, The Standard Harappa seal was a square or oblong plaque made of steatite stone. The primary purpose of the seal was probably to mark the ownership or property, but they may have also served as amulets.

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The Mesopotamian records from about 2350 BC onwards refer to trade relations with Meluha, the ancient name of the Indus region. Harappan seals and other material have been found at Mesopotamia. There is evidence of trade with Sumer.

Art and Craft

The Harappan culture belongs to the Bronze Age. Bronze was made by mixing tin and copper. Tools were mostly made of copper and bronze. For making bronze, copper was obtained from Khetri in Rajasthan and from Baluchistan, and tin from Afghanistan.

Cotton fabrics were quite common. Woollen clothes were used in winter.

Harappans were very fond of ornaments (of gold, silver, ivory, copper, bronze, precious stones) and dressing up. Ornaments were worn by both men and women. Women wore heavy bangles in profusion, large necklaces, ear-rings, bracelets, figure-rings, girdles, nose-studs and anklets. The Harappans were also expert bead makers.

Potter's wheel was in use. Their pottery was red or black pottery. People played dice games. Their favourite pastime was gambling. For their children, they made cattle-toys with movable heads, model monkeys which could slide down a string, little toy-carts and whistles shaped like birds, all of terracotta.

The Harappans' most notable artistic achievement was their seal gravings, esp. those of animals. The red sandstone torso of a man is particularly impressive for its realism. However, the most impressive of the figurines is perhaps the bronze image of the famous dancing girl (identified as devadasi), found at Mohenjodaro.

Religious Life

The main object of worship was the Mother Goddess. But the upper classes preferred a god, nude with two horns, much similar to Pasupati Siva, represented on the seal is figure with three horned heads in a yogic posture. He is surrounded by an elephant, a tiger and a rhinoceros, and below his throne is a buffalo. Near his feet are two deer. Pashupatinath represented male deity.

Phallus (lingam) and yoni worship was also prevalent. Many trees (papal), animals (bull), birds (dove, pigeon) and stones were worshipped. Unicorn was also worshipped. However, no temple has been found, through idolatry was practiced. At Kalibangan and Lothal fire altars have been found.

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The people probably believed in ghosts and evil spirits, as amulets were worn. Dead bodies were placed in the north-south orientation.

The religious life appears to be secular and the dominance of religion does not appear to be very strong. The people of Indus Valley Civilization appear to be materialistic.

Script

The script is not alphabetical but pictographic (about 600 undeciphered pictographs). It was written from right to left in the first line and left to right in the second line. This style is called 'Boustrophedon'.

Political Organisation

There is no clear idea of the political organization of the Indus Valley people. Perhaps they were more concerned with commerce and they were possibly ruled by a class of merchants. Also there was an organization like a municipal corporation to look after the civic amenities of the people.

Decline of the Civilization

The Harappan culture lasted for around 1,000 years. Invasion of the Aryans, recurrent floods, social breakup of Harappans, Earthquakes, etc. are listed as possible causes for decline of the civilization.

Important Harrappan Sites

HARRAPPA:

Excavations at the site led to following specific findings:

- Two rows of six granaries with brick platforms. These 12 granaries together had the same areas as the Great Granary at Mohenjodaro.
- Evidences of coffin burial
- Single-room barrack;
- Evidence of direct trade interaction with Mesopotamia
- A red sandstone male torso
- Stone symbols of female genitals.

MOHENJODARO :

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Some of the specific findings during the excavations of Mohanjodaro include :

- A College, a multi-pillared assembly hall.
- The Great bath – (the most important public place of the city)
- A bronze dancing girl
- A Seal representing Mother Goddess with a plant growing from her womb, and a woman to be sacrificed by a man with a knife in his hand.

- A bearded man
- A seal with a picture suggesting Pushupati Mashadev
- A large granary (the largest building of Mohenjodaro)
- Evidence of violent death of some of the inhabitants (discovery of human skeletons put together)

KALIBANGAN

Kalibangan was an important Harappan city. It is located in Ganganagar district of Rajasthan. The word kalibangan means 'black bangles'. A ploughed field was the most important discovery of the early excavations. Later excavations at kalibangan made the following specific discoveries:

- A wooden furrow
- Seven fire altars in a row on platform, suggesting the practice of the cult of sacrifice.
- Remains of massive brick wall around both the citadel and the lower town (the second Harappan site after Lothal to have the lower town also walled)
- Bones of camel
- A tiled floor which bears intersecting design of circles
- A human head with long over eyes, thick lower lips, receding forehead and stright pointed nose.
- Evidences of two types of burials : (a) burials in a circular grave and (b) burials in a rectangular grave.

LOTHAL

Lothal was an important trade centre of the Harappan culture, the town planning in Lothal was different from that of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro. The city was divided into six sections. Each section was built on wide platform of unripe bricks. Each platform was separated by a road with

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width ranging from 12 feet to 20 feet. Excavations at Lothal led to some specific discoveries which include ;

- Remains of rice husk. The only othe Harappan city where the rice husk has been found is Rangpur, near Ahmedabad.

- An artificial dockyard
- Evidence of horse from doubtful terracotta figurine
- Impressions of closth on some of the seals
- Evidences of direct trade contract with Mesopotamia
- Houses with entrances on the main street (the houses of all other Harappan cities had side entries)

- A ship designed on a seal
- Evidence of double burial (burying a male and a female together in a grave).

ROPAR

Ropar is a Harappan site from where remains of pre Harappan and Harappan cultures have been found. Buildings at Ropar were made mainly of stone and soil. Pottery. ornaments, copper axes, chert blades, terracotta blades, one inscribed steatite seal with typical Indus pictographs,

- Several burials interred in oval pits, and a rectangular mud-brick chamber.
- There is also an evidence of burying a dog belwo the human burail (Though the practice was prevalent in Burahom in Kashmir it was rere in the Harppan context)

CHANHUDARO

These factories produced seals, toys and bone implements. It was the only Harappan city without a citadel. The findings include:

- Bronze figures of bullock cart;

Name of the site	River on hich the site si	Year of excavation	Name of excavator

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	situated		
Harappa	Ravi Sahni	1921	R.B.Dayaram
Mohanjodaro	Indus Satluj	1922 1955	R.D/Bannerjee Y.D.Sharma
Ropar	Satluj	1955	Y.D.Sharma
Banawali	Sarasati	1973	R.S.Bisht
Amri	Indus	1929	N.G.Majumdar
Kalibangan	Ghaggar	1959	M.S.Vats and B.B.Lal
Alamgirpur	Hindon	1958 1990-91	Y.D.Sharma R.S.Bisht
Dholavira		1990-91	R.S.Bisht
Lothal	Bhogwa	1954	S.R.Rao

- A small pot suggesting an inkwell,
- Footprints of an elephant and a dog chasing a cat.

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